

ADDRESS ON THE SOCIAL EVIL.

By CHIEF OF POLICE PETERSEN, Oakland.

It is rather a presumption on my part to address such a learned body as this; it is rather unexpected that one in my position could give you very much information on this question. But I take it that it is the doctors' business to save life—that is what you are for; it is also the policeman's vocation to save life in a smaller sense.

The social evil is agitating not only the people in California, but the whole civilized world, and what to do with this problem is a question of great debate. You are all familiar with the fact that the governor signed a bill a few days ago for the abatement of houses of prostitution. This bill was widely discussed, and was advocated by the so-called reform and religious organizations. I have no fight with the reform or religious organizations, but the question is this: your average reformer speaks of the social evil from an economic or moral standpoint, and it strikes me that the question should be treated from the physiologic standpoint. There has been no time since civilization existed that prostitution did not exist. It first commenced in the early stages of history as a religious ceremonial, and has come down through the ages as a religious ceremonial until the opposition of Christianity was set against it, and in the opposition to prostitution the greatest antagonist are the religious associations. If we could abolish prostitution in the world it would be a great thing, but how, is the problem that concerns us, to be solved? Those of you who are familiar with history will agree with me that no effective law has ever presented itself to diminish prostitution. We have had certain vice commissions that have existed who have presented remedies for this great disease, but when we realize that vice commissions have existed since the 18th century, you realize that we have nothing new. In the 18th century Maria Teresa appointed a vice commission with very extensive powers; they made rules against women appearing in short dresses in cafes, and they confiscated the property of prostitutes and put them in prison. After these rules had been abolished by succeeding rulers of that nation, illegitimacy increased to a greater extent in Vienna than in any other capital of Europe. Wherever prostitution has been suppressed, it has been followed by a tremendous increase in illegitimacy. Our reformers are trying to use exactly the same methods as were employed by Maria Teresa. In England, when such rules were put into operation, the result was to scatter the disease and increase prostitution. It is the same in the United States. To abolish the houses of prostitution causes the scattering of them all over the city and the infesting of the resident districts.

With the conditions that confront us at this time, the question is—what are we to do with prostitution? The abolition of houses of prostitution does not take away the cause; the cause, as you doctors know, is *human desire*. You can sum up the economic conditions, moral and religious, and they do not begin to balance that one great

reason—human desire. You are familiar with the fact that man is a polygamous animal. The chimpanzee and the gorilla, man's biologic next of kin, are monogamous, but man has been and is polygamous. This fact complicates our conditions. You doctors know that the time of man's power to procreate is from 40 to 50 years and that woman has no such length of time. Prostitution exists in our day and age because of the demand for it, and man, more than anything else, is the reason for that demand; it seems to me, therefore, that it is the man's job to meet it. It is more a physiologic proposition than it is a moral or economic proposition. These things complicate it, but the great fundamental is that it is based upon human desire, the greater part man's desire. Our friends the reformers say we should abolish the *houses* of prostitution, and ethically I can agree with them, but how are you going to abolish *prostitution* under present economic conditions? Then there is the question of the superfluous woman. You know that more women are born into the world than men; and with that you have the polygamous tendency of man. We have—in seaport towns like Oakland and San Francisco—a large floating population whose morals are of a low order, who think that the social evil is necessary. You have men from the mills, mines, army and navy, with the desire for sexual intercourse. How are you going to make them continent? If you tell them that they ought to abstain, will it do any good? They have no moral ideas on this subject—no ideas for the time except the satisfaction of their desire.

Do you expect that by the abolishment of houses of prostitution you will prevent these men from satisfying the greatest passion that human nature is heir to? Human nature needs a vent, and so long as the social fabric is as it is, it is futile to expect men to obey the present moral code.

This is one of the greatest problems, and you all know the attending problem of venereal diseases. A great deal more widespread than the white plague is the red plague, but how are we to meet that question? In San Francisco they have a clinic for the treatment of these diseases, and doctors and reformers say it is of little value and a failure because the people who attend it are not properly treated. But should we say that this clinic is a failure if the women who do go there check, even a little, the spread of venereal disease? It is needless for me and for you to say that in this clinic the examinations are made too quickly, for that is so, but the clinic can be made better. If you have a properly segregated district where you can have some control over these women, you can do something for the prevention and cure of these diseases, but if you scatter these women they will go somewhere, and then how are you to handle the situation? It seems to me that these people should be controlled, then this great plague could be checked. But to scatter these people throughout a city is to cover up the sore—not to cure it.

Take, for example, the city of New York. Under the Parkhurst crusade, they drove these women out of their houses into the streets in the middle

of winter, and they scattered all over the city. The result has been the great police graft—the scattering of these houses tends more to graft than any other one thing. In Oakland we have the so-called red light district under regular police control. We do not permit any liquor to be sold there. We believe that there should be a place for these women, and they do not have to pay us for the privilege. In New York, on the other hand, these houses are scattered all over, and the patrolman says to the woman: "You are running a house against the rules of the Police Department; you have got to pay or I will lock you up," and so they levy payment for their privilege. We have in Los Angeles another instance. Los Angeles is not as moral as Oakland and there are conditions there that we would not tolerate. The Chief of Police there is a fine man, and I said to him: "How about your social evil? Have you minimized it?" He replied, "Not at all—we have simply scattered it!" One of our ministers said that he would be glad to have these houses scattered and invade the Piedmont district; he thought it would be the best way to have the prostitute next door to the man who is responsible for her. But you can never control this disease when it is once scattered through a community; but because it is hard, because it is a great problem, there is no reason why every man and woman should not strive for better conditions, and you doctors could stop the advances of prostitution more than anyone else. You do far more than the minister, and upon the doctors of this land will depend the future greatness of the Union. Medicine and surgery, more than any other powers, can stop prostitution, because it is a *physiologic* question. Teaching human kind to change and reform by proper education in our schools and colleges, by getting away from all this false and foolish modesty and teaching young men and women how they are made and what they are made for will do more for the abolishment of the social evil than laws closing houses of prostitution. You cannot make people good by legislative enactment. It is a long job, but it is worth while; and there is no sense in doing things that have been found to be not worth while. When the doctors take hold of the matter intelligently and enthusiastically, we will get somewhere, and when doctors, reformers and theological experts get together, we will be able to solve the problem in America.

REPORT OF A CASE OF RABIES IN WHICH A CHILD BIT HER FATHER.

By RALPH E. ALLEN, M. D., and F. L. HORNE, M. D., Newcastle.

Acting upon the suggestion of Dr. Wilbur Sawyer, director of the state hygienic laboratory at Berkeley, Cal., this paper is presented to the medical profession.

While an epidemic of rabies has been known to exist among the dogs of this community, and several people bitten by such rabid dogs have had the Pasteur treatment for rabies administered to them,

the general public has been apathetic to the dangers of the disease to such an extent that dogs have been allowed to go unmuzzled, a child has been bitten and allowed to go untreated until the symptoms of rabies appeared. It is this case to which we draw your attention with the hope that it may stimulate more active efforts on the part of the profession to educate the public as to the dangers of this disease and the means of prevention.

Case. Florence W., age 6 years. Previous to July 2 the health of this child was normal. On above date she was bitten by a strange dog which disappeared and has not been seen since. The bite consisted of one wound located on posterior aspect of the left forearm one inch below the elbow joint. The bite was one-half inch in length and was not intercepted by clothing. Healing of the wound occurred without the development of any infection.

Symptoms of attack: Tuesday, July 22, patient showed anorexia and a general feeling of distress in the abdomen. General malaise evident all day Tuesday, the 22nd.

Wednesday morning general nervous irritability developed. Vomiting set in and continued at hourly intervals throughout the day. Patient evidenced great desire for water which upon drinking caused vomiting.

Saliva drooled from mouth throughout the day. Dilatation of pupils occurred. Patient slept poorly Wednesday night when dyspnoea developed.

Thursday showed extreme restlessness with beginning incoherent speech and movements. Pulse rate Thursday, 8 a. m., 104; temperature, 101°. Temperature, 4 p. m., 104°. At 8 p. m. it had dropped to 102° F. Pulse at 11 p. m., 200.

Marked delirium developed Thursday evening. Patient picked at and tore her finger nails. Expression of terror on face. Constant thirst was present but attempts to drink not only caused vomiting by now, but spasm of the glottis. No edema of glottis was detected. The whole musculature of the throat became spasmodically contracted and the water was forcibly ejected.

Expectoration and vomiting of a dark bloody material occurred at times Thursday evening. Examination of nervous system showed no Koenig sign. Knee jerks were present.

About midnight Thursday patient bit her father at the carpo-metacarpal joint of index finger on left hand. The bite occurred in an already open wound which fact necessitated the father having to undergo the Pasteur treatment. He is now receiving this at Berkeley under the supervision of Dr. Sawyer.

The little girl received two injections of morphine Thursday night, grain one-sixteenth at 10 p. m. and grain one-eighth at midnight.

The first dose had no effect. The second one caused her to lapse into a semi-conscious state. During the last five hours of life, the head was thrown back on the pillow and the chin raised, due to a spastic condition of the muscles of the neck. Death occurred at 5 a. m., Friday.

In the experience of the writers the period of incubation for both human beings and dogs is within a month. This is variable, however, as has been shown by Sawyer and Gundrum at the hygienic laboratory at Berkeley. According to these investigators it may last a year.